

In the past few years, laws have been passed to reduce the amount of regulation the Federal Communications Commission can place on owners of broadcasting companies, and more are in the works. One for example was the lifting of cross-ownership ban, which prohibited television station owners from owning print media businesses. There is more leniency to who gets what and at what cost-which is not necessarily a good thing. The Federal Communications Commission is in a process of reviewing more of its regulatory laws to make appropriate changes to improve diversity, localism and competition but imposing less regulation is not necessarily the most appropriate way to go.

Before the Federal Communications Commission eases regulation, they should think about how large companies may monopolize businesses, broadcasting and presenting media that is in their favor how will this increase competition? I do not like where deregulation is going. I agree that with deregulation the market is opened up, but this does not necessarily mean that more diverse individuals will be able to take advantage. Big name companies network better and have more funds to buy out small independent companies. Control over how many stations one owner can own should remain. I believe the 7-7-7 rule was reasonable. Plenty can be done with seven AM stations, seven FM stations and seven television stations.

It used to be that they Federal Communications Commission would choose the most qualified applicant for ownership of a station. Now, auctions are conducted. Who ever is able and willing to pay the most is granted ownership. A positive aspect of this is relieving the Federal Communications Commission of the burden to choose. But with this

strategy big name companies are going to continue to win, leaving small independent companies behind. I believe the purpose of a radio station or television station should be a determining factor of ownership. More specifically, the mission of a broadcasting business should be looked at closely in determining whether its owner gains ownership, like it was done in the past.

Deregulation has lifted the cross-ownership ban. Print media should remain separate from radio and television. A person who owns a television and radio station and a newspaper business will abuse all three by placing only certain advertisements and endorsement of companies that are in favor to him or her. We will only be exposed to the same things, no real diversity. We may be deceived in believing that all three (the radio, television and print businesses owned under the same name) are different, like I once believed that Gap, Banana Republic and Old Navy were all owned by a different company (they are owned under Gap Inc.). Broadcast businesses with print media under one large company allow owners to exploit the public, by allowing them to see and hear the same things in each, like editorial opinions, commentaries, and taking on national and world issues.

I do not think deregulation necessarily brings more diversity. There are large companies out there having control-monopolizing the broadcast industry who do programming in their favor and in their benefit. I have to agree with Commissioner Copps' statement from the Richmond En Banc Hearing on Broadcast Ownership (02/27/03). He stated, "That fundamental values and democratic virtues are at stake here -- things like localism, diversity, competition and maintaining the multiplicity of voices and choices that undergird our marketplace of ideas and that nourish American democracy."

